

TX, in support of "Operation Iraqi Freedom." During a routine trip for food as Michael and his crew were returning to camp, an improvised explosive device that had been buried in the sand was set off by remote control as the tank rolled over it. As a result of his injuries, Michael passed away on October 28, 2003, at the age of 26.

Michael joined a long list of family members in service. In light of his outstanding service, he was appointed Sergeant by the young age of 20. He sought to make a career in the Army, aspiring to become an ROTC instructor.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored today to have this opportunity to recognize the bravery and dedication of SSG Michael Paul Barrera.

**ANTHONY BARSAMIAN SPEAKS
ELOQUENTLY ABOUT THE ARME-
NIAN GENOCIDE**

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2005

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, last month, Anthony Barsamian, Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Armenian Assembly of America, made an eloquent speech at the "International Refugee, Relief and Recognition Tribute" hosted by the Armenian-American community in California. Mr. Barsamian eloquently stressed the importance to all of us of remembering that "the history of genocide must remain inviolable and periodically affirmed regardless of political discomfort or cost so that we may learn its lessons."

Mr. Speaker, I think it is a grave error that this Congress has not been allowed to vote on a resolution affirming this important point with regard to the terrible history of the genocide perpetrated against the Armenians. We cannot allow current foreign policy considerations to override our obligation in this critical area. Anthony Barsamian cogently and forcefully reminds us why such an omission is unacceptable, and I ask that his moving, thoughtful remarks be printed here.

ASSEMBLY BOARD OF DIRECTORS CHAIRMAN
ANTHONY BARSAMIAN'S REMARKS AT THE
"INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE, RELIEF AND REC-
OGNITION TRIBUTE"—FEBRUARY 24, 2005

Your Eminence, Reverend clergy, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

This remembrance and recognition highlights two issues of critical importance to the horrific recurrence of Genocide and the apparent impotence of the world to stop this crime against us all.

First, the history of genocide must remain inviolable and periodically affirmed regardless of political discomfort or cost so that we may learn its lessons.

Second, the actions of 3rd parties are vital to raising awareness about the crime as soon as it becomes known, to taking resolute steps to end the genocidal process, to bring to account the perpetrators, to provide comfort to the survivors, and to forever remember all instances of genocide.

This is why the Armenian Assembly joined with the AGBU and the Diocese to remember those nations and organizations that took action while the Armenian Genocide was being carried out and subsequently. Arme-

nians remain deeply indebted to all who refused the easy path of indifference and inaction. You saved lives, you affirmed the truth, and you bore witness so that the world would be better equipped to act on the meaning of "Never Again".

As is evident today, the Republic of Turkey refuses to accept the judgment of history that the Ottoman Turkish government committed genocide against its Armenian minority. Instead, Turkey attempts to impose its revisionism on a civilized world that knows better, but occasionally succumbs to Turkish demands and intimidation by refraining from affirming the truth. Nations who had initially committed to participate in this recognition commemoration withdrew in the face of such Turkish pressure. This solves nothing. The dead are not honored for their sacrifice. The actions of the righteous are not recalled. And ironically, the descendants of the victimizers are not allowed to come to terms with the truth.

Nevertheless, we pause today as we begin this 90th commemorative year to give thanks to all nations and organizations that came to our aid—but particularly to those that attended today despite the Turkish government's campaign to stop you.

For Turkey's state sponsored denial effort, having this event is a defeat. This is a good day for the truth. As Armenian-Americans, we recall with special appreciation the leading role of the United States in attempting to prevent the Armenian Genocide and in aiding those that survived. As Armenian-Americans, we look to the United States to continue this proud chapter of American history by reaffirming the facts of this most calamitous chapter of Armenian history. There is an inevitability to universal affirmation of the Armenian Genocide, and America has not and will not be an exception.

A case in point is the recently concluded visit of U.S. Ambassador to Armenia John Evans with major Armenian-American communities across the country. In his public commentaries, Ambassador Evans repeatedly employed the words "Armenian Genocide" to properly characterize the attempted annihilation of our people by Ottoman Turkey.

This is in keeping with President Reagan's proclamation of April 22, 1981 where he stated in part, "like the genocide of the Armenians before it, and the genocide of the Cambodians which followed it—and like too many other persecutions of too many other people—the lessons of the Holocaust must never be forgotten". . .

And also with the thrust of President Bush's 2001 to 2004 April 24 messages that set forth the textbook definition of genocide without using the word. Ambassador Evans completed the thought.

The Ambassador's characterization also is in keeping with the public declarations of over 120 renowned Holocaust and Genocide scholars regarding "the incontestable fact of the Armenian Genocide".

Further, Ambassador Evans' characterization conforms to the summary conclusion of the International Center for Transitional Justice on the use of the term Armenian Genocide. ICTJ stated that "the Events, viewed collectively, can thus be said to include all of the elements of the crime of genocide as defined in the Convention, and legal scholars as well as historians, politicians, journalists and other people would be justified in continuing to so describe them."

The Armenian-American community will not rest until the United States formally and irrevocably reaffirms the Armenian Geno-

cide. By so doing, we forever advance the special role of the United States in genocide prevention.

Today, we are here to honor 17 nations who have joined the movement towards universal affirmation of the Armenian Genocide. You have appropriately remembered this instance of man's inhumanity to man. You have stepped forward to combat denial and revisionism. We will never forget your solidarity.

As Voltaire said, "to the living we owe respect, but to the dead we owe only the truth".

**INTRODUCTION OF THE "END
GRIDLOCK ACT"**

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2005

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON and TOM DAVIS in introducing the "End Gridlock Act." This bill is a refinement of a proposal, the "Washington Regional Transportation Act" (H.R. 2882) that I introduced last session.

Unfortunately, this region is not yet prepared to embrace last year's proposal and establish a regional transportation authority. Last year's bill called for the creation of a regional transportation authority, one that could receive a dedicated revenue source, issue bonds and be in an ideal position to coordinate land use and transportation funding decisions. I regret that the time is not ripe for this a proposal.

The defeat of the Northern Virginia transportation referendum in 2002, in my view, moved us away from real progress in solving our transportation problems. Unfortunately, poor management of the state's transportation programs and false promises by past state officials left the public distrustful that any meaningful solutions were possible.

I'd trade the price of a daily cup of coffee for real investments in transit and road improvements, something that would shave 10 minutes off my commute. I think a majority of the public share this view, but they have been skeptical and fear that the money raised would not be spent wisely or spent on projects that have their own built-in opposition and controversy.

The legislation I am introducing today does not to create a regional authority, it won't build new roadways. Instead, it focuses on making improvements to what already exists. It is a small but important first step that I hope builds the foundation for greater regional coordination and cooperation and builds public confidence for longer term solutions.

Believe me, we need better coordination and cooperation. We need to rebuild confidence. The legislation I am introducing today borrows from some of the best, simplest and most cost-effective proposals. Some of the ideas were drawn from local transportation and planning experts. They are small ticket items, but if they prove successful, maybe the consensus will be there to support a more ambitious agenda. The Washington Post highlighted some of these potential projects in a series featured last year.